

April 28, 1976.

Professor Joshua Lederberg, Ph.D.
Stanford University Medical Center
Department of Genetics
Stanford, California 94305

Dear Josh:

I apologize for not having answered to two letters dated February 1 and April 6, 1976, until today. Thank you very much for sending a copy of my first letter ever written to you on November 18, 1947. At that time we all were most excited about Oswald Avery's great discovery of bacterial DNA as the causative agent in type transformation! Soon it will be 30 years ago *(my letter)*.

With regard to your comments on articles written by highly undistinguished journalists about your opinion and attitude towards the risks of ever growing atomic energy power stations, I have sent a copy of the whole set, including your letter, to the "Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft". This Organization created a Commission of its Senate for questions of risks by atomic energy (products) and genetic manipulation (wanted and unwanted). The secretary of the Commission is Dr. Klofat - and, if I remember correctly, he invited you last year on my request to participate in a session of that Commission (November 1975). At that time you were unable to attend. After all it appears that it would have just been the right time to release a well-balanced declaration via the "Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft".

Personally, I think you should not take the newspaper men too seriously. In the Max Planck Gesellschaft, whose research projects are sometimes also a matter of newspaper criticism, we use to state: "What Soraja can stand, we should stand even better" ... In other words, our world of today is so dynamic (in a bad sense) that events of yesterday will be forgotten tomorrow. My Institute was a subject of great attack by East German (say: Russian in the background) scientific Journals. They claimed that we are preparing biological warfare on the basis of highly pathogenic bacteria. I decided, finally, not to answer at all to their statements, although our friends in East Germany very much urged us to do so. But at that time we felt that probably authorities wanted to find out what we really do - and, thus, any statement would have been a kind of information to them, be it either stating "we don't .." or else "we do...". And after a few months the whole affair became silent and was never taken up again.

On the other hand, a clearcut statement at the right time, released by the authority of an Organization like the "Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft" might really be considered. If you feel like that, I think you

should either write to Dr.Klofat or inform me (for further contactin
the President of the DFG, Professor Maier-Leibnitz).

I hope that we may meet at WHO in Geneva at the occasion of
pre-ACMR meetings.

With warm regards,

Yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Otto', written in a cursive style.

Otto Westphal